

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION 323

By Gresham

A RESOLUTION to honor the memory of the Reverend William Earl Torkell, Sr., of Williston.

WHEREAS, the members of this General Assembly were greatly saddened to learn of the passing of the Reverend William Earl "Bill" Torkell, Sr.; and

WHEREAS, Reverend Torkell was an exemplary public servant and consummate professional who worked assiduously to improve the quality of life for his fellow citizens in numerous capacities; and

WHEREAS, born in Shelby County on September 23, 1937, Reverend Torkell was a man of integrity who embodied the best of his community; he had been taught the value of service to others by his parents, the late Eino and Ione Wilkins Torkell; and

WHEREAS, he was educated at Hargrove Military Academy and Mississippi State University, and later graduated from Lambuth University and the Memphis Theological Seminary; and

WHEREAS, Reverend Torkell served as a minister for the United Methodist Church for thirty years, offering the utmost character and probity in all his chosen endeavors; and

WHEREAS, during his early years as a minister, he held pastorates in Moscow, Rossville, Piperton, and Stanton, earning the respect and admiration of his colleagues and congregations alike for the quality and dedication of his work; and

WHEREAS, at the time of his death, he was serving as the Pastor of the Macon United Methodist Church in Fayette County, where he was dearly loved by the congregation for his dry wit, humor, sincerity, and genuine humility; and

WHEREAS, following his strong passion and desire to help others, Reverend Torkell also dedicated his ministry for a number of years in service as a chaplain with the Methodist Hospital System; and

WHEREAS, he also committed his singular skills and leadership abilities to several community, religious, and charitable organizations in Fayette County, including the Methodist Outreach Program; and

WHEREAS, noted for his dedication and Christian service, he was an active participant in the local alcohol rehabilitation program and area prison and jail ministries, and he was chosen as Fayette County's Man of the Year for his many accomplishments in these fields; and

WHEREAS, he was deeply devoted to his family, and he always endeavored to remain true to family values of the highest order; and

WHEREAS, Reverend Torkell enjoyed the loving companionship of his wife, Marjorie Torkell, for fifty-one years; and

WHEREAS, he was the proud and loving father and father-in-law of Pamela Dawn Emerson and her husband, George, and William Earl Torkell, Jr., and his wife, Lisa; and

WHEREAS, he will also be fondly remembered by his six grandchildren and a host of friends and loved ones; and

WHEREAS, with his quiet demeanor and compassionate nature, Reverend Torkell was known for his solid Christian belief, his service and love, and his role as a reservoir of faith and outreach to the people of Fayette County; and

WHEREAS, it is fitting that this General Assembly should pause to remember the bountiful life of this exceptional religious leader, public servant and human being; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE ONE HUNDRED SIXTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES CONCURRING, that we honor the memory of Reverend William Earl Torkell, Sr., reflecting fondly upon his impeccable character and his stalwart commitment to living the examined life with courage and conviction.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that we express our sympathy and offer our condolences to the family of Reverend Torkell.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.